

To: Public Meeting - Saturday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2003 - Anchorage Legislative Office  
 Fax: Local Boundary Commission: 907-269-4539

From: Andy McLaughlin  
 PO Box 8043  
 Chenega Bay, AK. 99574  
 907-573-5092

Please read this at the hearing!

Subject: "unorganized borough" review

I would like to address an important and troubling concern of the residents who reside in my remote Alaskan community. Though we are far and few between, I am sure that our opinions are very similar to the thousands of other remote living residents of Alaska. In the first place, the title of this subject alone has alarmed us. We do not consider ourselves an "unorganized borough". In fact, we are not even a borough at all, there is a big difference between the two. Most of the people who reside in remote Alaska have chosen their unique and unusual lifestyles for a reason. The main constituent of that choice is the benefit of the freedom that we experience from an independence that only exists away from the social norms encountered in city lifestyles. Life is much different in those more highly populated urban areas and we like not being a part of those ways. Per capita, our voting numbers are relatively few in comparison to the representation by voters who have chosen to reside in the more developed areas with higher concentrations of people (who have easier access and more motivation to frequent the polls). Unfortunately for us, the governing body system is set up to more accurately represent the higher number of residents in the cities. This is justly so, as the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, but we not only exist apart from their desires we are not part of their systems. Along with our low numbers comes a higher ratio of people who choose not to vote, or they lack the ability to be at the polls. Our desire to remain apart from the general public has developed a multi-generational increased level of apathy towards voting. In all reality, even when at its organized best, the miniscule voice of our vote becomes muted into silence by the masses of urban voters who hold vastly different opinions than those most commonly held within the hearts of rural people. This imbalance in adequate representation consequently mandates unjustified regulations upon the ranks of the few who live here at the whim of the masses who do not. The only saving grace is that we do not live in a borough and consequently remain comfortably separate from such establishment. We are disgusted in disbelief that our tiny remote populace has already been mandated into inclusion with the "Anchorage Hillside" district. I am sure that Con Bundy, as the previously elected representative, hopes to do his best to represent us, but we are so small and isolated from the majority of his constituency that we are entirely removed from anything to do with his agenda and we always will be. Logically, town folk are his influence and their interests are his priority. The unfortunate consequence that has resulted from this forced commission upon us is an undoubted inaccurate representation. It invariably does not suit the desires of the few remote people who exist in a realm far far removed from that of the general public on the Anchorage Hillside. This situation in itself is a travesty and the recent new developments upon the political drawing board are bound to add further insult to injury. We want to be no part of any borough development.

Furthermore, the potential development of a Prince William Sound Borough will only open the door even more for taxation without representation. Myself, my family, and my friends are all landowners in my remote area. We live in one of the only remaining remnants of this great country of ours where the American Dream is still alive. Our home is part of the last frontier and our individuality and personal liberties are alive and well. If a borough is developed, it will tragically kill that dream. For a fact, it will give rise to some future representative who will be given authorization to act by an electorate that is not only geographically separate from us, but more importantly culturally and socially separate from us. This potential future representative will need his own salary of course, where he can lobby periodically for his own pay raises. The money will have to come from somewhere, so new tax structures will be introduced and imposed onto remote living landowners. Many of these people are formally unemployed and live well below poverty level. They work very hard at surviving and subsisting. If you impose a borough structure to loom over their heads, then they will need to seek other modes of income in order to pay into the newly mandated tax structures. Their lifestyle will become forever altered. We do not subscribe to the structure of the corporate American system that now has further potential of becoming imposed on us. The potentially new governmental borough authority and command will be unAmericanly forced upon the ranks of the few in our area by the opposing will of the people in the cities who want us to become more like

them. The vast majority of those people can barely even fathom that we do not have stores, not to mention the lack of all of the other modern amenities that they themselves take for granted as being "normally" available. Even the politicians do not fully understand the truth behind the scenes of our different level of needs and dissimilar public awareness. I ask, how can someone that is supposed to act as a magistrate accurately reflect the wishes of a group and exemplify with adequate accuracy and fairness upon a faculty that they do not possess? Quite frankly, we live in different worlds and a marked division between Alaska residents who reside in boroughs should remain apart from those who reside in the undeveloped wild places of our beautiful state. As soon as you incorporate us, you will destroy the last bastion of true freedom in this phenomenal remote landscape that we call home. It is not a borough.

We strongly oppose any inclusion of ourselves and our home territory into a borough. That would not suit the wishes or the needs of our people. Though I am sure that I could obtain over one hundred signatures in petition to support the above mentioned commentary, in the essence of saving time, I am forwarding this statement to your attention. We hope that these sincere sentiments do not fall upon deaf ears. Please do not include the remote island and coastline communities of Prince William Sound into a borough. Great shame and curses will fall upon you if you do.

With Whole Hearted Sincerity,

